

ROLE OF EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY IN DISTANCE TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMME

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ABSTRACT

Educational Technology is the development, application and evaluation of systems, techniques and aids to improve the process of human learning. In almost all the important activities engaged in the name of teaching, training or instructions the possibility of using Educational Technology has been explored and is being explored, even today. Educational technology is a matter of making education more meaningful or a question of improving its quality or even the issue of making it accessible to more children. One thing that always prominently matters is the teacher, the quality of his/her preparation and his/her maintenance as a professional. The teacher's performance is the most crucial input in the field of education. So their training with special linkage with technology is one of the most essential needs. The use of Educational Technology is an innovative practice, which needs to be adopted by every teacher. The present study was undertaken with a view to evaluate the quality of Educational Technology used in teacher training, to specify the advantages of educational technology in teacher training and to identify the problems in the use of Educational Technology in teacher training. To achieve the desired end, data was collected from 200 student teachers/prospective teachers enrolled in B.Ed course of Allama Iqbal Open University in the semester spring 2006 from Multan region through a thirty one items questionnaire on likert scale. The study reports that use of Educational Technology does not get its due status in the Pakistani settings. The major findings are the course does not include all the essential components of educational technology, attitude towards usefulness of Educational Technology is not positive, teacher training programme is not supported by the use of mass media, the teacher training programme is not supported by models and display cards, teacher training programme is not supported by use of computers, teacher training programme is not supported by micro teaching. Besides its very interesting findings were found. It is recommended that computer must be provided during training, Internet facilities should be provided during training session and by using these essential components teacher training programme can be improved by the effective use of Educational Technology.

INTRODUCTION

Education is a continuous process, which enlightens human brain and leads towards the heights of perfection. It brings development in human character systematically and promises to improve his potentialities. Whitehead (1967) states: "What education has to import is an intimate sense for the power of ideas, for the beauty of ideas and for the structure of ideas, together with a particular body of knowledge which has peculiar reference to the life of the being possessing it."

Whereas Mayer (1972) considered it is as a process of leading to the enlightenment of mankind. Now the question arising is, that what would be the medium or source of formal education. The answer is "the teacher".

A trained and equipped teacher can do this job with more perfection. It is a fact that "no country of the world will be using merely traditional methods that can hope to make education universally available or to train the number of qualified teachers needed to satisfy the growing demand for education". Analysing the same grim situation Hawkrige (1983) points out: "Today there are some twenty million teachers in the world. It has been calculated that to deal with population explosion with the generalization and with educational requirements in term of ideal teacher population ratio, seventy million teachers will be needed by the year 2000, if present educational system is retained."

UNESCO (1981) has already confessed that the ratio of

education development is declining in Europe and North America where the number of students is much greater than the limited number of teachers. Supplementing the conventional methods, by introducing new approaches and innovative methods for communication can cover this distance.

Education differs from training in the sense that education includes the total development of the person while training focuses on specific habits and skills necessary for the accomplishment of a particular job. Training may not have the liberating effects on education. It may be a necessary prerequisite for education, but, training alone is not sufficient for the development of an individual to the whole. Technology in education can bring improvement into educational atmosphere as it has wider spectrum as pointed out by Fred Percival and Henry Ellington (1984): "Educational technology is the development, application and evaluation of system, techniques and instructional aids to improve the process of human learning".

To be concise, instructional technology in education is anything and everything, which tries to improve teaching and learning process systematically. Its range extended from the teacher's smile or frown at appropriate movement, to the use of computers to assist training or instructions, the possibility of using instructional technology has been explored and is being explored even today. (Ahluwalia, 1992)

The Commission on Instructional Technology (1970) recommended it as: "A systematic way of designing, carrying out and evaluating the total process of learning and teaching in terms of specific objectives based on research in human learning and non human media to bring about more effective instruction".

Anyhow, educational technology is a matter of making education more meaningful or a question of improving its quality or even the issue of making it accessible to more children. One thing that always prominently matters is the teachers- the quality of his/her preparation and his/her maintenance as a professional. His performance is a more crucial input in the field of education. Whatever

policies may be laid down, in the ultimate analysis, these have to be interpreted and implemented by teachers, as much through their personal example as through teaching learning process (Ministry of Education, 1990). So their training with special linkage to technology is one of the most essential needs.

However, in recent decades recognition of the role of teachers in education has been found gradually increasing in all countries including developing ones. The impact of this recognition of qualitative improvement in the quality of teacher and education varies from one country to the other depending upon the peculiar socio-economic and educational conditions prevailing in each of them. In developing countries, the rapid increase in population on the one hand and state's pledge to provide universal education and a host of other have suddenly increased the demand for qualified educational personnel mainly for the teachers whose supply is simply beyond the means of relatively small number of training institutions in these countries. As a result, to bridge the gap between the demand and supply a big chunk of untrained and sometimes under-qualified teachers are recruited. For the untrained teachers induction as teacher is the first experience of teaching and obviously for them all, training has to be essential and in-service only.

Apart from this specific situation, today the task of a common teacher with any previous qualification, training with co-ordination with technology and experience has also become more demanding and challenging. Even the trained teachers today have been rendered out of date and less effective by changing educational ideas and development strategies (Siddiqui, 1991). The third Regional Conference of Ministers of Education of Asian countries 1976 rightly observed that: "As long as education is needed and knowledge about education and children continues to increase the teacher has always something new to learn. Learning to teach is a life long pursuit".

Educational Technology is the short cut way in achieving different predetermined goals.

The use of educational technology is an innovative practice, which needs to be adopted by every teacher. As Rowntree, D (1973) described the various fields of Educational Technology as following: "Identifying aims and objectives, planning the learning environment, exploring and structuring the subject matter, selecting appropriate teaching strategies and learning media, evaluating the worthwhileness of the learning system and using the insights gained from evaluation to improve the effectiveness for the future".

Objectives of the Study

This study was based on the following objectives:

1. To evaluate the quality of educational technology used in teacher training.
2. To identify the problems in the use of educational technology in teacher training.
3. To suggest possible solutions to the problems involved in the use of educational technology in teacher training.

Research Methodology

Population and Sampling

Population of the study was consisted of all the student teachers enrolled in B.Ed Programme offered by Allama Iqbal Open University in semester spring 2006. Totally 200 student teachers/prospective teachers had enrolled in B.Ed course of Allama Iqbal Open University in the semester spring 2006 from Multan region.

Research Tool Development and Data Collection

Since the study was descriptive in nature, survey approach was considered appropriate to collect data. For the purpose, one questionnaire consisting of 31 items on five point (Likert Scale) was developed. The reliability of the questionnaire was 0.978 (Cronbach's Alpha).

Administration of Research Tool

The finalized questionnaire was administered on the selected sample personally and the whole sample responded.

Data Analysis

Data collected through questionnaire were coded and analysed by utilizing SPSS XII in terms of Mean scores; Standard deviation and taking the test value 3.5 for

independent sample t-test, scale values assigned to each of the five responses were as:

Level of Agreement	Scale Value
SA	5
A	4
UNC	3
DA	2
SDA	1

Findings

Data collected through the questionnaire was analysed in terms of mean, standard deviation, and standard error of mean and independent sample t-test. The findings drawn out from the data analysis are given below:

It is evident from the Table 1 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test. The p-value is less than 0.05, so it is concluded that the course does not include all the essential component of Educational Technology.

It is evident from Table 2 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is greater than 0.05 and t-value is less, so it is concluded that Educational technology helps learners in understanding the material effectively.

It is evident from Table 3 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is less than 0.05, so it is concluded that the course is not being supported by the use of TV programmes.

It is evident from Table 4 that when the mean score was

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
The course includes all the essential component of educational technology	200	3.15	1.361	.096	-3.688	.000

Table 1. Essential component of Educational Technology

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
Educational technology helps learners in understanding the material effectively	200	3.61	1.299	.092	1.143	0.150

Table 2. Effectiveness of Educational Technology in understanding the material.

compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is less than 0.05, so it is concluded that the course is not being supported by the use of radio programmes.

It is evident from Table 5 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is less than 0.05, so it is concluded that the course is not being supported by the use of A.V. Aids.

It is evident from Table 6 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is less than 0.05, so it is concluded that the course is not being supported by the use of models and display cards.

It is evident from Table 7 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is less than 0.05, so it is concluded that the course is not being supported by the use of audio tape recorder.

It is evident from Table 8 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
The teacher training course is being supported by the use of TV programmes	200	2.07	.959	.068	-21.088	.000

Table 3. Support of TV programmes

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
The teacher training course is being supported by the use of radio programmes	200	2.23	1.279	.090	-14.045	.000

Table 4. Support of radio programmes.

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
The teacher training course is being supported by the use of A.V. Aids	200	3.16	1.477	.104	-3.303	.001

Table 5. Support of A.V. aids

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
The teacher training course is being supported by the use of models and display cards	200	3.08	1.466	.104	-4.099	.000

Table 6. Support of models and display cards

test, the p-value is less than 0.05, so it is concluded that the course is not being supported by the use of VTR.

It is evident from Table 9 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is less than 0.05, so it is concluded that the course is not being supported by the use of OHP & transparencies.

It is evident from Table 10 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test. The p-value is less than 0.05, so it is concluded that the course is not being supported by the use of graphic charts.

It is evident from Table 11 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is less than 0.05, so it is concluded that the course is not being supported by the use of computer.

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
The teacher training course is being supported by the use of audio tape recorder	200	2.60	1.322	.109	-9.625	.000

Table 7. Support of audio tape recorder

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
The teacher training course is being supported by the use of VTR	200	2.64	1.537	.109	-7.913	.000

Table 8. Support of VTR

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
The teacher training course is being supported by the use of OPH & transparencies	200	2.05	1.164	.082	-17.621	.000

Table 9. Support of OHP & transparencies

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
The teacher training course is being supported by the use of graphic charts	200	3.00	1.475	.104	-4.842	.000

Table 10. Support of graphic charts

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
The teacher training course is being supported by the use of computer.	200	2.77	1.514	.107	-6.867	.000

Table 11. Support of computer

It is evident from Table 12 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is less than 0.05, so it is concluded that the course is not being supported by the use of microteaching.

It is evident from Table 13 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is less than 0.05, so it is concluded that the recorded programme for the course is not of good quality.

It is evident from Table 14 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is greater than 0.05 and t-value is less, so it is concluded that the recorded programmes facilitate the students in their better understanding.

It is evident from Table 15 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is less than 0.05, so it is concluded that the information provided through Radio does not help the students comprehending the topic.

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
The teacher training course is being supported by the use of microteaching	200	3.00	3.099	.219	-2.305	.022

Table 12. Support of microteaching

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
The recorded programme for the course is of good quality	200	2.88	1.396	.099	-6.331	.000

Table 13. Quality of recorded programmes

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
The recorded programme facilitates the students in their better understanding	200	3.59	1.372	.097	.928	.355

Table 14. Better understanding through the recorded programmes

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
The information provided through Radio helps the students comprehending the topic	200	2.64	1.139	.081	-10.736	.000

Table 15. Understanding of topic by information provided through Radio

It is evident from Table 16 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is greater than 0.05 and t-value is less, so it is concluded that the TV broadcast have long interaction with students mind for effective learning.

It is evident from Table 17 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is less than 0.05, so it is concluded that the A.V. aids make the teaching learning process more effective.

It is evident from Table 18 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is greater than 0.05 and t-value is less, so it is concluded that graphic charts used in the training have left deep impact on students.

It is evident from Table 19 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is less than 0.05, so it is concluded that micro teaching method provides an opportunity of developing self confidence in students.

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
The TV broadcast has long interaction with students mind for effective learning	200	3.66	1.347	.095	1.680	.094

Table 16. Effectiveness of TV broadcast for long interaction with students mind

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
The A.V. aids make the teaching learning process more effective	200	4.14	1.095	.077	8.327	.000

Table 17. Effectiveness of A.V. aids in teaching learning process

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
Graphic charts used in the training have left deep impact on students	200	3.61	1.267	.090	1.228	.221

Table 18. Impact of graphic charts

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
Micro teaching method provides an opportunity of developing self confidence to students	200	3.68	1.239	.088	2.054	.041

Table 19. Development of self confidence to students through micro teaching

It is evident from Table 20 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is greater than 0.05 and t-value is less, so it is concluded that the video recorded lessons of eminent scholars/teachers help the students in comprehending the lectures.

It is evident from Table 21 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is less than 0.05, so it is concluded that the models are not normally used to pose the actual situation.

It is evident from Table 22 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is less than 0.05, so it is concluded that Internet facility has helped the students in shoring the information on the topic with all the teacher education institutions globally.

It is evident from Table 23 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is less than 0.05, so it is concluded that the educational technology helps in developing the course curriculum.

It is evident from Table 24 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is less than 0.05, so it is concluded that tutors

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
The video recorded lessons of eminent scholars/teachers help the students in comprehending the lectures	200	3.62	1.210	.086	1.403	.162

Table 20. Effectiveness of the video recorded lessons of eminent scholars/teachers

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
Models are normally used to pose the actual situation	200	2.86	1.396	.099	-6.481	.000

Table 21. Use of models to pose the actual situation

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
Internet facility has helped the students in sharing the information on the topic with all the teacher education institutions globally	200	3.78	1.338	.095	2.959	.003

Table 22. Sharing the information on the topic with all the teacher education institutions globally via Internet

are not fully trained in using educational technology in classroom.

It is evident from Table 25 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is less than 0.05, so it is concluded that tutors did not encourage the students to use educational technology in teaching learning process.

It is evident from Table 26 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is less than 0.05, so it is concluded that the programmes developed for radio are not quite relevant to the course.

It is evident from Table 27 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is less than 0.05, so it is concluded that the A.V. aids are not normally used in classroom.

It is evident from Table 28 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is greater than 0.05, so it is concluded

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
Educational technology helps in developing the course curriculum	200	3.85	1.159	.082	4.269	.000

Table 23. Effectiveness of educational technology in developing the course curriculum

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
Tutors are fully trained in using educational technology in classroom	200	2.30	1.456	.103	-11.654	.000

Table 24. Tutors' capacity to use Educational Technology in classroom

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
Tutors encouraged the students to use educational technology in teaching learning process	200	2.60	1.467	.104	-8.679	.000

Table 25. Encouragement of the students to use Educational Technology

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
The programmes developed for radio are quite relevant to the course	200	2.05	1.074	.076	-19.095	.000

Table 26. Relevance of the radio programmes to the course

that the use of computer in the classroom had raised the interest of students towards learning.

It is evident from Table 29 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is less than 0.05, so it is concluded that the flip charts are not frequently used in the classroom.

It is evident from Table 30 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is less than 0.05, so it is concluded that computer facility to be used in the classroom was not provided by institution.

It is evident from Table 31 that when the mean score was compared to test value 3.5 by applying one sample t-test, the p-value is less than 0.05, so it is concluded that the tutor does not use educational technology in the classroom/study centre.

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
A. V. aids are normally used in classroom	200	2.70	1.490	.105	-7.591	.000

Table 27. Use of A.V. aids in classrooms

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
Use of computer in the classroom had raised the interest of students towards learning	200	3.50	1.207	.085	.000	1.000

Table 28. Effectiveness of use of computer to raise the interest of students towards learning

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
	200	2.53	1.418	.100	-9.727	.000

Table 29. Use of flip charts in the classrooms

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
Computer facility to be used in the classroom was provided by institution	200	2.45	1.536	.109	-9.667	.000

Table 30. Provision of computer facility by institution

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	p-value
Tutor use educational technology in the classroom/study centre	200	2.55	1.325	.094	-10.138	.000

Table 31. Use of Educational Technology in classroom

Conclusion

On the basis of the findings the conclusions are following:

1. Educational technology helps learners in understanding the material effectively but the course did not include all the essential component of Educational Technology.

2. The A.V. aids make the teaching learning process more effective, graphic charts used in the training have left deep impact on students, micro-teaching method provides an opportunity of developing self confidence within students, the video recorded lessons of eminent scholars/teachers help the students in comprehending the lectures, the use of computer in the classroom had raised the interest of students towards learning, the TV broadcast has long interaction with students mind for effective learning, and internet facility has helped the students in sharing the information on the topic with all the teacher education institutions/globally.

3. The recorded programmes facilitate the students in their better understanding but those were not of good quality. The information provided through Radio did not help the students comprehending the topic and the radio programmes were also not quite relevant to the course.

4. Tutors are not fully trained in using Educational Technology in classroom. They did not use Educational Technology in the classroom/study centre as well as not encourage the students to use educational technology in teaching learning process.

5. Course is not being supported by the use of TV programmes, radio programmes, A.V. aids, models and display cards, audio tape recorder, VTR, OHP & transparencies, graphic charts, computer and microteaching. The A.V. aids, flip charts, models are not normally used in classroom. Computer facility to be used in the classroom was not provided by institution.

Recommendations

On the basis of finding and conclusions, following recommendations are suggested:

1. The course may be revisited to include all the essential component of educational technology.

2. Tutors need more training to enhance their capacity to use educational technology in classroom. They may be motivated to encourage the students to use educational technology in teaching learning process.

3. Course may be supported by the use of TV programmes, radio programmes, A.V. aids, models and display cards, audio tape recorder, VTR, OHP & transparencies, graphic charts, computer and micro-teaching to make the teaching learning process more effective.

4. Regional office makes sure the use of instructional educational technology during the teachers training workshops.

5. Continuous monitoring and evaluation regarding the use of educational technology will help to improve the implementation.

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